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Mother's last visit to Watervliet

Mother arrived at Watervliet Wednesday Jan 10th 1821. She had before been in the practice of sending word when she was coming; but this time she came very unexpectedly. She appeared to be in better health than she had usually enjoyed of late, and was remarkably comfortable in her feelings. The next day she went round among the Sisters, noticing very attentively what they were employed about. She went into the kitchen, cook-room and dining-room and examined the cupboards, pantries and other byplaces in a very critical manner—spoke with every one she met with in her way, and appeared to feel exceeding comfortable and happy. She said to the Sisters, “I have come this time like a thief in the night, and for the future I shall always come so; I shall not wait to know whether you are ready, but shall come upon you unawares, whether you are ready or not; but I shall come when I feel a gift.” She seemed to observe very particularly, what everyone was doing, and seemed to take much delight in observing all their works.

The next Sabbath (14th) in the afternoon, she came into the house and attended meeting. The anthem entitled “The Treasures of Immortality,” was sung. After singing she spoke and said; “Well Brethren and Sisters, I feel thankful for this privilege to assemble with you. We have a great privilege to assemble ourselves together, and it feels like a great privilege to me, and I should think it might to you all. A part of the family has had a privilege to attend two meetings today,^{1#} which is a greater privilege than you usually have. Every good Believer will gain by every privilege they have. You have had a further privilege and I may say a greater privilege to prove yourselves in our absense, this time, than you have ever had before. I hope you have all been faithful and if you have you will feel a blessing; the gospel will look beautiful to you; it looks very beautiful to me and it will look beautiful to all that are faithful; the more faithful you are the more beautiful it will look to you. You cannot travel in the little narrow path only by stripping off one thing after another; and this you cannot do any faster than the gospel gives you light to see; and you cannot see any faster than you travel. You must travel from one degree to another, and the light of the gospel will shine brighter and brighter to all that are faithful; but to them that are not faithful it will be darkness instead of light. There is

[#] Some of the younger part of the family had attended the public meeting at the meeting-house with the family order.

no danger of your being any too small. A meek, humble, condescending feeling is the most God-like.”

She spoke considerable on this subject, and in a very solemn manner enjoined upon all the necessity of taking up their crosses faithfully. She appeared to feel very comfortable, and spoke in a very pleasant loving manner. After we had labored one song, she spoke again and enjoined it it upon every one to be alive; to be living souls in the work of God and called upon us to shake, which was instantly obeyed, and we had a powerful shaking. We then proceeded in our laboring animated by Mother’s powerful spirit and clapping of hands, we had a lively and joyful meeting. Mother still continued to encourage and animate us by frequently speaking at the close of the songs. After we had ended our labours, and had formed our ranks for dismissal, Mother spoke again, and again animated us by a lively and powerful clapping of hands, and seemed to fill every soul with the very life and power of her spirit.

Mother continued remarkably comfortable all the week, was very observing of every thing that passed, and seemed to have a very penetrating gift to see and feel the state of every thing among us, and appeared to be much engaged to increase the spirit of union among the Believers, and to gain an increase of order in the Society for that purpose, both in things spiritual and temporal.

On the Saturday following (Jan 20.) one of the Brethren went in to see her, and spoke to her concerning a particular order she had lately given us. She told him it was the order of God, and spoke to him in a very feeling manner about the orders of God, and expressed the feeling sense she then had of their beauty and excellency—how beautiful they appeared to her—She said they appeared like a golden chain that held the people of God together; that every order made a link in that golden chain, “and that order” (of which she had been speaking) said she, “makes one more link in the chain.” So extraordinary was her gift, at this time, and so feelingly expressed, that it powerfully effected the feelings of the Brother she was speaking to, so that he wept very feelingly, and Mother wept with him.

Soon after this she walked over to the office and spoke to the Deaconesses on the same subject, and expressed her lively sensations concerning the orders of God. She said the orders of God never appeared so beautiful to her in all her life as they did while she was speaking to D—H— in her shop.

The next day (Sabbath) she again attended our meeting; and appeared

still very cheerful and comfortable. In this meeting she ministered the gift she had felt concerning the golden chain, and addressed the Brethren and sisters nearly as follows.

“This family appears at present to be visited with a considerable degree of suffering and affliction.^{2#} But this need not deprive you of the possession and enjoyment of the gifts of God: for outward affliction will not deprive a soul of the comforts and blessings of the gospel.”

“You must all labor to keep order; for it is your protection. The orders of God seem hard to a carnal mind; but I should say there are not many if any, here present, so young but that they may see and feel the necessity of keeping good order. To my sense Believers are held together, in union, by a golden chain. This chain is composed of the gifts and orders of God; and every order is a link in the chain. And if you break any of these orders, you break this chain, and are exposed to be led astray. But while you are careful to keep the gifts and orders of God, you are surrounded with this golden chain, and are secure from evil. You are on safe ground and nothing can injure you, unless by disobedience you break a link in this chain, and so expose yourselves to the enemy without; for the enemy cannot come within to injure any one.

“You may see the necessity of order and union by viewing the kingdoms of this world. For if they had not a kind of natural union and order they could not stand, but would soon tumble to pieces and destroy each other, till there would not be a man left upon earth. And this I think may serve as a suitable comparison between the Kingdom of Christ and the Kingdoms of this world.”

“How miserable a person must feel without friends. All people want union and friendship; and if we cannot conduct in such a manner as to gain friends, we find a hard travel indeed. Union is more valuable than all earthly things; and you ought always to be careful to support a just union and relation together in the gospel. You ought to be very careful how you speak to each other. Speak kind and loving one to another according to the simplicity of the gospel, and neither give nor take offence. I do not feel to speak much at this time; but I hope you will remember what I have said, and if you are careful to observe it you will certainly be under a blessing.”

This was the last time Mother ever came into meeting.

[#] One young Sister (Sylvina Butler) had been buried the Wednesday before, and many of the family were afflicted with a kind of influenza.

Wednesday 24th Mother went to visit the family at the second order and returned the same afternoon.

Thursday 25th she came into the house, spent some time and appeared still very comfortable. In examining and looking over the clothes of the young Sister lately deceased, Mother observed that she had nothing among her things that was superfluous, and said, "You may see her mind was not after such things, and mine never was, when I was young; I never wanted to get things that were not necessary; it is not right." She also spent some time in teaching some of the Brethren and Sisters about laboring; as she felt a particular gift to have the believers gain an increase in their manner of laboring. After giving them suitable instructions, she sent some of the Brethren and Sisters over to the Second Family to instruct the Brethren and Sisters there.

Friday evening (26th) she came into the house again to stir up the brethren & Sisters to [l]earn to labor more perfectly, and spent the evening. As she went out of the Sisters division of the meeting-room she said, "Well sisters I don't see as you need any thing only an increase of the same." She then went into the Deaconess's room and observed to the Sisters, that she had heard the first Elders say, that we should be glad to pick up every crumb that ever fell from their mouths, and, (referring to the collection of the sayings of our first Mother & Elders) she said we had taken much pains to pick up their crumbs, and (adverting to the gift of laboring) she said, "This is one of Father Joseph's crumbs." "Yea," replied Sister Ruth, "and next it will be said, We are picking up Mother's crumbs." "Yea," said Mother.

Saturday 27th She came into the house to eat her dinner, and soon went out, and never came in afterwards. This evening, about meeting-time, as she and Sister Ruth were in Elder Abiathar's room in the Meeting house, and they three were engaged in their little meeting, singing and kneeling, she was suddenly seized with cold chills, and soon after went to bed sick. But by a proper application of suitable medicines, which seemed to operate very favorably, she appeared the next week to be on the recovery, and continued so thro' the week, and was remarkably comfortable in her feelings all the week.

Sabbath Feb. 4th she had a particular gift concerning her successors in the Ministry. This she opened to Sister Ruth alone, naming those who were to take the lead in the Ministry after her decease. It has since been remarked, that, during her sickness in the summer of 1819, when many

expected her to be very near her end, she felt no gift on this subject, tho' she was several times questioned about it.

Monday Feb 5th (being her birthday) She felt so well as to be able to walk over to the Office. She had had for several days past, felt a desire to go to the Office and see the Deaconesses, and had agreed to go at 10 O'Clock; but before the time came she began to feel an inward pain and distress; she felt the more urgent to go, lest she should not be able, if she did not go soon. She therefore went about half past 9: But her pain and distress still increasing upon her, she tarried till about 12 O'clock and then was led back to the Meeting house. Her disorder still continued to increase with occasional intermissions till her decease. On tuesday she again spoke to Sister Ruth concerning those she had named as her successors in the Ministry—expressed her confidence in them, and said she could feel safe in leaving her charge with them. On wednesday she seemed to fail very fast—After dinner the chief part of the Brethren & Sisters went to see her—she was dying—her senses appeared to be clear and bright—she seemed calm, patient and resigned. Her smiling spirit seemed to depart in peace and love. She expired a quarter before three O'clock. February 7th 1821.

The following circumstance is worthy of remark. The first sabbath after Mother came to Watervliet in the afternoon she sent for two of the brethren, who expected to set off the next morning on a long journey of business. After giving them some good counsel and advice for their protection in their absence, she asked Morrell how long he expected to be gone. He said 3 or 4 weeks. She said, If you return in 3 weeks and 3 days you will see me, but I cannot promise any further. In three weeks and 3 days to the very hour, Morrel went to the Meeting house and saw her dying. The Brethren had returned a few days before, but on account of her sickness they did not go to see her.

Important Gifts of the Ministry.

September 1821 We were called to minister the following gift to the people viz. That they should love and bless all the brethren and sisters that were held in union—That they must overlook each other's faults, and observe only that which is good; by this means they would soon discover something in everyone, worthy of their love and blessing. They were to labor till they had gained the gift, and then come and manifest their feelings to the Elders —